



THE CREATURE FROM THE BLACK LAGOON carries off the girl in a swoon. (Also in a jiffy and in his arms. Universal 1954.)

you scream as they leap
from the screen

HORRORS FROM THE THIRD DIMENSION

by jerry neeley

dimension of danger

HAVE YOU EVER had a giant frog hop in your lap?

A crashing alien spaceship hit you right between the eyes?

Been shot at under water by spear guns or dodged knives and flying meat cleavers and even a low-flying bat with the head of Shemp Howard?

You have if you saw THE MAZE, IT CAME FROM OUTER SPACE, THE CREATURE FROM THE BLACK LAGOON or any of the Three Stooges' comedies that were filmed in the amazing 3-D process.

Those of you who have not seen any of the 3-D films have missed one of the most visually exciting concepts the movies have ever produced.



ROBOT MONSTER strikes again! Some filmonster fans felt they should go on strike after seeing this, er, monstrosity!



One of the 13 GHOSTS in the Castle (William, that is) of Horrors. Columbia 1960.

mysterious illusion

The process of 3-D is based on the human eye. Each of our eyes sees two different views; the left eye sees a little more to the left and the right eye a little more toward the right. 3-D photographs each scene twice with the cameras positioned like our eyes. When the two scenes are projected on top of each other, with the aid of a special pair of glasses the left eye sees one picture and the right sees the other. Then the brain fuses both pictures into one, creating the illusion of depth.

3-D, son of tv

What gave birth to the 3-D film craze?
Television!

Yes, television, for in 1952 Hollywood studios discovered that business was bad because millions of people were staying home watching TV for free instead of paying to go to the movies. They were in trouble, they needed something to get the people away from the tiny screen and back in front of the large one. Then, on 27 November 1952, an independent company previewed BWANA DEVIL, filmed in 3-D, or what they called Natural Vision. People came in flocks to see spears, tables and lions hurtle out of the screen at them!

The major studio heads' eyes lit up. They saw a new way to beat TV. They could draw the people

to the theaters with bigger screens and curved screens and stereoscopic pictures.

history of 3-D

Actually, BWANA DEVIL was not the first 3-D film altho its gets credit as such. Paramount, between 1921 and 1924, made several 3-D shorts called Plastigrams. In 1935 MGM distributed 3-D film shorts they called Pete Smith's Audioscopes; Frankenstein was featured in one of these shorts.

Between the years 1953-54 there were no less than 38 feature length movies made in 3-D! Most were westerns and horror/sci-fic.

The first 3-D horror film came from the studio that first gave us sound—Warner Brothers. It was called HOUSE OF WAX and was a remake of their earlier MYSTERY OF THE WAX MUSEUM (1933). Audiences gasped as wax heads rolled down the aisles and Vincent Price, with outstretched hands, seemingly closed them around their throats. The film grossed \$5,000,000 and started the 3-D horror cycle with a scream.

Universal, shortly after the success of HOUSE OF WAX, came out with the first 3-D science fiction film the same year, 1953. It was called IT CAME FROM OUTER SPACE and its original idea & development was by Ray Bradbury, who called it "THE METEOR."

The story began very effectively, before the title and credits were shown, with a huge meteor-like



If you don't wax enthusiastic over this exclusive gore-trait shot of Vincent Price, you'll be sentenced to two years in a boiling vat of fat in the HOUSE OF WAX! (And that's a long sentence, any way you look at it!)



One of the frightening fiends from the weird Canadian film **THE MASK**.

alien craft crashing out of the screen directly at the audience. Bradbury, Ray Harryhausen & Forry Ackerman were among the startled spectators who winced and dodged the flame & rock, at the sneak preview as it burst from the screen when the ship crashed in the desert. Other visual thrills included a one-orbed Xenomorph, an inhabitant of the alien spaceship, leaping from the screen at you plus another great explosion at the end as the creatures from space were forced to leave Earth.

the kitchen sink in 3-D

1953 also saw a quickie 3-D effort called **ROBOT MONSTER** which ranks right up there with **PLAN 9 FROM OUTER SPACE** and **FIRE MAIDENS FROM OUTER SPACE**; or should I have said "right down there." The film, despite the so-called 3-D process, was incredibly bad. The story had something to do with ridiculous-looking creatures from the moon that looked like gorillas with deep-sea diving helmets. It starred George Nader and if you want to catch it on TV, its title has been changed to **MONSTERS FROM THE MOON**.

Somewhere between 1953 & 1954 there were several short Three Stooges comedies released in 3-D. These were used as extra features being co-billed with the 3-D full length features. Needless to say, with the Three Stooges everything, but

everything, was thrown at you. Among other things: knives, meat cleavers, rocks, chairs, fists, feet, heads, tables, syringes, water, ghosts and gorillas. One of the comedies even had a flying bat with the head of Shemp Howard that dived at you. (How scary can you get?)

3-D goes ape

Warner Brothers decided on another horror remake in 1954 of **MURDERS IN THE RUE MORGUE** which they retitled **PHANTOM OF THE RUE MORGUE**. The plot concerned a sinister Karl Malden who kept a trained orangutang that would brutally kill anyone possessing a bracelet with bells that tingled, which Malden would distribute. Of course, Malden became victim of his own pet at the end.

Universal came out with their second 3-D horror entry in 1954, too. **THE CREATURE FROM THE BLACK LAGOON** swam thru theaters across the nation and established the "Creature's" name with other Universal all time greats like **Frankenstein**, **The Wolfman**, **Dracula** and **The Mummy**. It proved so popular that Universal followed it up with a sequel in 1955 called **REVENGE OF THE CREATURE**, also in 3-D. There was a third entry in the Creature series, **THE CREATURE WALKS AMONG US**, but not in 3-D.

to meet a mankind unprepared!
...invading our world
...with their power to look
like humans...or change to
objects of
awesome
terror!



From
Ray Bradbury's
great science
fiction story!

Starring
RICHARD CARLSON · BARBARA RUSH
with
CHARLES DRAKE · RUSSELL JOHNSON · KATHLEEN HUGHES
JOE SAWYER · Directed by JACK ARNOLD · Screenplay by HARRY ESSEX
Produced by WILLIAM WELAND · A UNIVERSAL INTERNATIONAL PICTURE



THEATRE

One of the exciting classic ads prepared to herald the coming of **IT CAME FROM OUTER SPACE**.



The fanstatic frightening Xenomorph that **CAME FROM OUTER SPACE** to menace audiences in darkened theaters throughout the land! (Universal 1953.)

Other studios got on the 3-dimensional bandwagon in 1954 too. From Allied Artists came a thriller titled **THE MAZE**. The story was about a mysterious old mansion with a maze that held a secret. The secret being revealed at the end to be a giant frog (about the size of a large dog) that was a distant relative of Richard Carlson's. (What a family tree he had!) Climax of the film came when the frog leaped out of the attic window of the mansion and seemingly fell on top of you.

20th-Century Fox got into the act with a 3-D horror mystery called **GORILLA AT LARGE**. The story dealt with several murders around a carnival, supposedly performed by a gorilla, but in the end we find out actually that the murderer is—no I won't tell you, why spoil it, see it and try & guess.

all a-gog with 3-D

GOG was loosed upon the public in three dimensions by United Artists also in 1954. This was an above average science fiction tale about a secret underground scientific testing base where Gog & Magog, two robots, go berserk and try to kill everybody in sight until foiled by Richard Egan.

Vincent Price came back in his second 3-D film as **THE MAD MAGICIAN** with the help of Columbia Studios. This was a delightful part for the sinister Mr. Price. He hammed it up good in a part



Better duck or THE CREATURE FROM THE BLACK LAGOON may reach right out of the picture and pluck you out of your seat!

much like in *HOUSE OF WAX* but instead of a sculptor he's a magician who is wronged and goes mad. Instead of turning people into wax statues, in this one he either burns them in his crematorium or separates them from their heads with a buzz saw. Price's make-up in this one, plus a black tux and cape, gave him a devilish appearance. His performance alone is worth the effort to catch this one on TV even if you can't see it in 3-D.

ghost of 3-D

The 3-D movie popularity began to decline shortly after *THE MAD MAGICIAN*. Warner Bros. originally intended to film Hitchcock's *DIAL M FOR MURDER* in 3-D, and as a matter of fact did, but decided not to release it in 3-D because they thought the 3-D films were dead; and indeed they were. The public no longer liked to wear the cardboard glasses, and besides, Cinemascope had arrived and had become more popular than the no longer novel films of 3-D.

There were no more 3-D films made until 1960 when William Castle, who was always looking for a gimmick (at least he used to be), decided to film part of his movie *THIRTEEN GHOSTS* in a process similar to 3-D. When a ghost appeared the audience had to put on their glasses in order to see it.

The following year, 1961, *THE MASK* was

made. *THE MASK*, like *THIRTEEN GHOSTS*, was only partly filmed in 3-D. When the character in the movie put on his mask, the audience was to don theirs. Then the audience was taken on a trip thru the brain of a madman, following a lost soul thru a world of demons & witches. A startlingly atmospheric movie.

THE MASK was the last; the last of the wonder movies that put the audience amidst the action & horror of the screen. That is, it was the last till recently. Some of you may have already seen it but it hasn't had an extensive run.

son of bwana devil

Arch Oboler, the man who first brought 3-D to the screen via *BWANA DEVIL*, made the new 3-D pic to try and arouse a new interest in them. His film was a science fictioner titled *THE BUBBLE*, about people trapped in a small town, unable to leave because of a mysterious "bubble" that surrounds them.

Motion pictures have come a long way. First they talked, then they moved and talked in color. After that came 3-D, Cinemascope, Cinerama, even full circle cinerama and "Odorama"!

What's next? Maybe the "feelies" prophesized in Huxley's *Brave New World*?

END